



United States Department of Agriculture



Fourth Annual Partners Meeting

United States Department of Agriculture and Community-Based Organizations

*“Challenge, Choice, Change:
Solutions That Strengthen
Farming and Rural Communities”*



August 1–3, 2007
DoubleTree Hotel
Crystal City
300 Army Navy Drive
Arlington, VA
20036

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
CIVIL RIGHTS

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Encourage minority and small farmers to stand up and be counted in the 2007 Census of Agriculture. NASS is committed to working with you to ensure that all operations, regardless of size, are counted. By participating in the Census, small and minority farmers and ranchers collectively shape decisions about community development, funding availability, farm policy and other issues vital to their future.

Thank you for promoting the 2007 Census in your communities.

United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

2007 CENSUS of
AGRICULTURE
FOR VOICE, FOR FARM, FOR FUTURE

www.agcensus.usda.gov



USDA Office of Outreach

*Creating Avenues
for Success:
Transforming Lives
and Communities*

Contact us:
Office of Outreach
Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250, Mail Stop 9473
Telephone: (202) 720-6350
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United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Help the Land**

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USDA

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*The USDA Office of the
Assistant Secretary for
Civil Rights welcomes
you to*

*The 2007
Partners Meeting*



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Partners IV - Greetings



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUL 30 2007

Partners IV Participants
Doubletree Hotel Crystal City
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Partners:

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Fourth Annual Partners Meeting—Partners IV. I am pleased that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) continues to support this signal event. Partners IV will help ensure access, equity, and accountability to traditionally underserved farmers, ranchers, and rural communities, and bring together a diverse group of constituents and USDA staff to engage in meaningful dialogue.

This year's theme, "*Challenge, Choice, Change: Solutions That Strengthen Farming and Rural Communities*" will allow participants to take a careful look at the remaining challenges, examine the available choices, and decide and act on ways to derive meaningful solutions that strengthen the farm enterprise and our rural communities. The 3-day event provides an opportunity for us to discuss how USDA can better utilize the expertise and networks of our partners to extend USDA's outreach to underserved constituents, and to more effectively deliver our programs and services.

More than 125 representatives of community- and faith-based organizations and minority-serving institutions are expected to be in attendance. Such representation highlights the potential role of the Partners Meetings in facilitating delivery of USDA programs and services to underserved constituents. Consequently, the Partners Meetings have become a major force for transforming lives.

Let us use this time together to learn more about the concerns of the partners, and about the successes we have made through mutual collaboration. We can also envision innovative and creative ways to ultimately come together as a community. I look forward to the time I will share with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Johanns".

Mike Johanns
Secretary

Partners IV - Greetings



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of the
Assistant Secretary
for Civil Rights

AUG 1 2007

1400 Independence
Avenue SW

Washington, DC
20250

Dear Participants:

This is an exciting time! It is my honor to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights during the convening of the Fourth Annual Partners Meeting (Partners IV). Thank you for accepting our invitation to this increasingly popular conference. We are pleased to have you participate, and to join with USDA in the fourth round of conversations.

As you peruse the program, you will note the introduction of several innovations:

- training sessions;
- a special workshop on accessing faith-based program funding;
- stories of successful USDA/CBO collaborations that have transformed lives and communities, and
- a new "Partners Award" for excellence in outreach.

All of these are logical next steps that have resulted from the previous Partners meetings.

Many of you have a history of initiating or responding to "calls to action" and as such, you are leaders in your communities and beyond. You have influenced others to take action on things that help improve the delivery of publicly-funded programs and services. We appreciate your long-standing and important efforts in this cause.

Enjoy the conference. Your voices, individually and collectively, on issues that matter to the small, beginning, and minority farm community, will be heard.

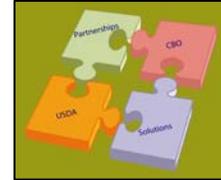
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margo M. McKay".

Margo M. McKay
Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

Partners IV - Greetings

August 1, 2007



Greetings and welcome to the 2007 Partners Meeting!

On behalf of my colleagues in community-based organizations (CBOs), we are excited about the record participation in the Fourth Annual Partners Meeting. More than 350 individuals have registered for the meeting. This validates the importance many of us hold about this joint meeting of USDA administrators and employees and representatives of CBOs and minority-serving institutions.

Beginning with the second Partners Meeting (2005), we have held sessions that provided opportunities to discuss critical issues that impact the long-term well-being of small, minority, and limited-resource producers. Using a “conversations” format, we have discussed long-standing issues of access, accountability, and equal opportunity from the county committee election process and the 2501 program, to foreclosures and the impact of certification on marketing higher value crops. We have joined USDA administrators and staff in meaningful dialogue to build bridges and forge partnerships. As we did last year, we have added new issues to our conversations as we have concluded others. This process has allowed us to explode many of the myths and misconceptions and eliminate barriers that have inhibited our progress to common goals.

Our theme for this year’s meeting, “*Challenge, Choice, Change: Solutions that Strengthen Farming and Rural Communities,*” is in part an apt description of the progress we desire and helps point the way to that progress.

I look forward to the discussions about the proposals in the 2007 Farm Bill, hearing about the many outreach success stories, and participating in the conversations and training sessions. Additionally, I look forward to seeing you, and learning more about how we can work together to improve rural communities and strengthen the farming community.

Sincerely,

Shirley Sherrod
Chair, Partners Planning Committee

Partners IV - Program At-A-Glance

Tuesday, July 31, 2007

Time	Event	Room
1:00 PM to 5:00 PM	Registration	Foyer-Crystal Ballroom
3:00 PM	Guests Check-In to Hotel	Lobby
2:00 PM to 4:00 PM	Meeting of USDA Recognized Employee Organizations	Jackson

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

Time	Event	Room
All Day	Guests Check-In to Hotel	Lobby
9:30 AM to Noon	Faith-Based and Community Initiatives/Rural Development Housing and Community Facilities Programs Technical Workshop	Harrison & Jackson
9:30 AM to Noon	Meeting of the Partners IV Support Team	Crystal Ballroom Salon A
10:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Registration	Foyer-Crystal Ballroom
Noon	Luncheon	Washington Ballroom
1:00 PM	Opening Plenary	Crystal Ballroom Salons A & B
3:00 PM	Break	
3:30 PM	Conversations 1-4	Jackson, Salon A, Van Buren, & Salon B
3:30 PM	Training Sessions	Harrison, Wilson, Salons C-E
6:30 PM	Dinner	Windows Over Washington
8:00 PM	CBO Partners Meeting	Jackson

Partners IV - Program At-A-Glance

Thursday, August 2, 2007

Time	Event	Room
7:00 AM	Breakfast	Washington Ballroom
8:00 AM to 4:00 PM	Registration	Foyer-Crystal Ballroom
8:30 AM	Second Plenary: The 2007 Farm Bill	Crystal Ballroom Salons A & B
10:15 AM	Break	
10:30 AM	360 Training Sessions	Jackson, Harrison, Van Buren, & Wilson
12:00 PM to 1:30 PM	Awards, Recognitions and Networking Luncheon	Washington Ballroom
1:45 PM	Conversations 5-9	Jackson, Harrison, Wilson, Van Buren, Salons A & B
3:45 PM	Break	
4:00 PM	Training Sessions	Crystal Ballroom Salon A
6:30 PM	Dinner	Windows Over Washington

Friday, August 3, 2007

Time	Event	Room
7:00 AM	Continental Breakfast	Washington Ballroom
8:00 AM	Third Plenary: Outreach Success Stories	Crystal Ballroom Salons A & B
10:30 AM	Break	
10:45 AM	Closing Plenary: Challenge, Choice, Change – Next Steps in Deriving Solutions	Crystal Ballroom Salons A & B
1:00 PM	Final Session	Crystal Ballroom Salons A & B

Partners IV - General Information

REGISTRATION

The Partners IV registration desk is open each day of the conference. Employees of USDA's Office of Outreach will be at the desk to assist you.

Registration desk hours are:

Tuesday, July 31, 2007	1:00 PM to 5:00 PM
Wednesday, August 1, 2007	10:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Thursday, August 2, 2007	8:00 AM to 4 PM
Friday, August 3, 2007	8:00 AM to Noon

PARTICIPATION IN PARTNERS IV

Only individuals who have registered for the conference can participate, and will be admitted to conference activities. ***Please wear your badge at all times while the conference is in session.*** If you lose your badge, please visit the registration desk to obtain a duplicate.

The Conference Program includes the times and locations for all sessions and events. Should there be a change to the program, it will be announced at a Plenary Session and/or you will receive written notice.

NETWORKING

Time for networking has been built into the conference agenda. Please use the breaks, meal functions, and the evenings to hold discussions with USDA staff and CBO representatives, and participate in the scheduled conversations, training sessions and plenaries.

CONFERENCE EVALUATION

An evaluation form for each session has been prepared. Time has been allocated during each session for completing the evaluation form. ***Please complete and submit the evaluation form for each session at the end of the session.*** In the evaluation form for the over-all event, please provide information on your suggestions and ideas for the future, including areas where you would like to contribute.

MESSAGES

A message board is available in the registration area (Crystal Ballroom Foyer) for posting telephone, lost and found, and other similar messages. Conference participants may also use the message board to contact other conference attendees or to post messages.

COMPUTER AND INTERNET ACCESS

USDA staff will assist you with word processing needs via a laptop computer available at the registration desk. All sleeping rooms feature wireless high speed Internet access. The hotel charges \$9.95 per day for this service. ***You must pay the fee charged by the hotel for using this service.***

Partners IV - General Information

MEALS AND REFRESHMENTS

Meals are provided only for eligible conference participants who met the registration requirements. Tickets for meals are included in the registration packet for those participants. ***You will be required to present your meal tickets at each meal function.*** A breakfast buffet is being provided on Thursday and a continental breakfast will be provided on Friday; lunch will be provided Wednesday, Thursday and Friday; and dinner will be served on Wednesday and Thursday.

If you used the registration form to request a special type of meal or indicated that you have special dietary needs, your meal ticket reflects this information. The type of meal you will receive at the luncheon and dinner is based on your request.

Refreshments are provided for all conference participants at breaks between the plenaries, conversations and training sessions.

Spouses cannot participate in the conference, including the meal functions, unless they are registered participants.

SPECIAL NEEDS

The staff of the DoubleTree Hotel wants to ensure a comfortable and safe stay for you and your guests while in the Nation's Capitol. Please contact the hotel staff if you have special needs such as information on local tourist attractions, restaurants, etc.

SPANISH LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

These experts simultaneously interpret conversation from English/Spanish. Simultaneous interpreting is real-time language conversion: speakers talk as they normally would, as the interpreter listens to one language and speaks in another at the same time. The interpreters are equipped with microphones that transmit their voices through wireless technology. Attendees requesting this service will have a wireless transmitter and will listen to the interpretation through headphones.

METRO ACCESS

The DoubleTree Hotel is located only a few blocks from the Pentagon City Metro Station which is serviced by the Yellow and Blue Lines. The DoubleTree Hotel provides a complimentary shuttle bus service to and from the Pentagon City Metro Station. The shuttle bus runs every 30 minutes on the hour.

If walking, exit the Pentagon City Metro Station and go north two blocks on either South Fern Street or South Hayes Street. Go right two blocks on Army Navy Drive. The DoubleTree will be on the right side of Army Navy Drive.

Partners IV - General Information

TRANSPORTATION TO METRO AREA AIRPORTS

For transportation to **Dulles International Airport**, the Super Shuttle leaves from the DoubleTree Hotel on a scheduled basis. Please check with the hotel concierge. One-day notice is recommended when making reservations. The estimated cost is \$30.00 to Dulles.

For transportation to **Washington National Airport**, the DoubleTree Hotel provides a complimentary shuttle service to and from the airport. Please check with the hotel to confirm departure times. You can also take a taxi or Metro. The estimated cost for a taxi to Washington National Airport is \$10.00. If using Metro, take the Blue or Yellow Line from the Pentagon City Metro Station to Washington National Airport. Pentagon City Metro Station is only two stops away from Washington National Airport. The estimated cost is \$1.35.

For transportation to **Baltimore-Washington Thurgood Marshall Airport**, the Super Shuttle leaves the DoubleTree Hotel on a scheduled basis. Please check with the hotel concierge. One-day notice is recommended when making reservations. The estimated cost is \$37.00 to Baltimore-Washington Thurgood Marshall Airport.

SHOPPING AND LOCAL TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

The DoubleTree Hotel is located just across the Potomac River from Washington D.C. The hotel is convenient to all major government centers and D.C. area attractions such as the Pentagon, Smithsonian Institution, the White House, the Capitol, the Washington Monument, and Arlington National Cemetery. The hotel concierge can provide you with information regarding local transportation to these attractions as well as information about the availability of evening tours.

The Fashion Centre at Pentagon City (Pentagon City Mall) is only two blocks away from the hotel at the intersection of South Hayes Street and Army Navy Drive. It offers more than 170 fascinating stores and restaurants. It is open until 9:30 PM, and thus available for your after-conference/evening shopping pleasure!

REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE

For assistance related to participation in the program, please see Gladys Gary Vaughn of the USDA Office of Outreach. If you need any other assistance, USDA staff are here to help. Look for the individuals with *green* name badges.

Conference Agenda



Partners IV - Conference Agenda

Tuesday, July 31, 2007

1:00 PM to 5:00 PM	Registration	Foyer-Crystal Ballroom
3:00 PM	Guests Check in to the Hotel Lobby	
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM	Meeting of USDA Recognized Employee Organizations	Jackson

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

All Day	Guests Check in to the Hotel	
9:30 AM to 12:00 PM	Pre-Conference Technical Assistance Workshop	Harrison & Jackson

*USDA Rural Development and Faith-Based and Community Organizations:
Partnerships to Strengthen Rural Communities*

This workshop will offer technical assistance training focusing on the opportunities available for faith-based and community organizations to partner with USDA Rural Development. The session will feature the Housing and Community Facilities Programs which provide the infrastructure to support service delivery to those in need. Presenters will share valuable and practical information on how to effectively access resources and utilize a variety of tools to benefit the community.

Moderator, Rhonda Brown, Rural Development, Washington, DC

Trainers and Presenters:

Erin White, Deputy Director, Faith Based and Community Initiatives, USDA
Miriam Moore, Deputy Director, Task Force for Faith Based and Community Initiatives, Dept. of Justice
Chris Alsop, Deputy Administrator, Community Facility Programs, Rural Development
Tom Hannah, Deputy Administrator, Multi Family Programs, Rural Development
David Villano, Deputy Administrator, Single Family Programs, Rural Development
Michael Steininger, Director, Multi-Family Housing Processing Division, Rural Development
Philip Stetson, Director, Single Family Housing Direct Loan Division, Rural Development
Dan Spieldenner, Senior Loan Specialist, Community Facilities Programs, Rural Development
Beth Jones, Senior Loan Specialist, Community Facilities Programs, Rural Development

Partners IV - Conference Agenda

Wednesday, August 1, 2007 (cont'd)

9:30 AM to 12:00 PM	Meeting of the Partners IV Support Team	Crystal Ballroom Salon A
10:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Registration	Foyer-Crystal Ballroom
Noon	Partners Networking Luncheon	Washington Ballroom
1:00 PM	Opening Plenary: Challenge, Choice, Change	Crystal Ballroom Salons A&B

Presiding: Sherie Hinton Henry, Associate Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, ASCR, Washington, DC

Posting of the Colors: Wicomico Memorial Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10159
Salisbury, Maryland

National Anthem

Moment of Remembrance

Welcome: Chukuo Thao, Chair, USDA/CBO Solutions Follow-up Team and executive Director, National Hmong American Farmers, California

Roll Call of the States: Lisa Purnell, Program Analyst, Office of Outreach, Diversity and Equal Opportunity, ARS, and Greg Walton, Public Affairs Specialist, Consumer and Community Affairs, FNS, Washington, DC

Introduction of Guests

Greetings: Carl-Martin Ruiz, Director, Office of Outreach and Diversity, Washington, DC

Musical Performance: "Wind Beneath My Wings," James Mobley, Staff Accountant, Forest Service, Washington, DC

Partners in Progress: Chukou Thao, California

Introduction of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights: Chukou Thao, California

Remarks and Introduction of Speaker: Margo M. McKay, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Washington, DC

Keynote Address: The Honorable Mike Johanns, Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, DC

Orientation to Partners IV: Gladys Gary Vaughn, Director, Office of Outreach and Lorette Picciano, Executive Director, Rural Coalition/Coalicion Rural, Washington, DC

3:00 PM **Break**

3:30 PM **The Conversations: Partners/USDA Dialogue Sessions**

Conversation #1: National Animal Identification System Jackson

Conversation #2: Coordination and Cooperation between Minority-Serving Institutions and CBOs Salon A

Conversation #3: Disaster Preparedness and Policy Van Buren

Conversation #4: New and Beginning Farmers Salon B

Partners IV - Conference Agenda

Wednesday, August 1, 2007 (cont'd)

3:30 PM	The Training Sessions	
Session #1:	FSA Servicing Options for Financially Distressed Borrowers	Harrison Room
Session #2:	Conservation Programs 101	Crystal Ballroom Salons D&E
Session #3:	Certification and Marketing	Wilson Room
Session #4:	Niche Markets	Crystal Ballroom Salon C
6:30 PM	Dinner	Windows Over Washington
8:00 PM	CBO Partners Meeting	Jackson

Thursday, August 2, 2007

7:00 AM	Breakfast	Washington Ballroom
8:00 AM to 4:00 PM	Registration	Foyer-Crystal Ballroom
8:30 AM	Second Plenary: The 2007 Farm Bill	Crystal Ballroom Salons A&B

Presiding: Shirley Sherrod, Chair, Partners Planning Committee, Federation of Southern Cooperatives, Georgia

This session explores changing needs and policy directions with regard to small, beginning and minority farmers, ranchers and farmworkers.

What are the key proposals in the Farm Bill that address the concerns of the small, beginning and minority farm and ranch community? What new tools are included that will help build the capacity of the small farm sector? How can this sector be better served by coordination within USDA, including increased support for the USDA Small Farms Coordinators Working Group and the Office of Outreach?

Discussants:

The Honorable Chuck Conner, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, DC
Gary Mast, Deputy Undersecretary for Conservation, NRE, Washington, DC
Edward "Jerry" Pennick, Federation of Southern Cooperatives, Georgia
Rudy Arredondo, HOLA/National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association, Washington, DC
Michael Harris, California Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association (BFAA), California

Dialogue with Audience

Partners IV - Conference Agenda

Friday, August 3, 2007

7:00 AM	Continental Breakfast	Washington Ballroom
8:00 AM	Third Plenary: Outreach Success Stories	Crystal Ballroom Salon A&B

Presiding: Geraldine Herring, Program Manager, Office of Outreach, ASCR, Washington, DC

Success Story #1: Yes You Can: Arkansas Farmers Earn USDA/AMS Certification and Connect with Farmworkers

Presenters: Ben Anthony, James Chatters, Stan Cox, Floyd Morrow, and Andre Williams, American Heartland Produce, Arkansas
James Davis, Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation, Arkansas
Scott Mexic, USDA, Washington, DC

Success Story #2: Touching Tomorrow: Hmong Women Farmers and Land Access

Presenters: Ly Vang, Association for the Advancement of Hmong Women in America, and Nigatu Tadesse, and Minnesota State FSA Outreach Coordinator, Minnesota

Success Story #3: Southern Alternatives: Georgia Women Establish Successful Pecan Processing Wholesale/Retail Business

Presenters: Ruby Hawkins and Carrie Thomas, Southern Alternatives, Georgia
Shirley Sherrod, Federation of Southern Cooperatives, Georgia

Success Story #4: Winds of Change: Minority Farmers Win Election to County Committees

Presenters: Albert C. Beatty, Lewis J. Boney, Larry D. Shaw, County Committee Members, North Carolina, Ken Nagel, FSA, Washington, DC

Success Story #5: Standing Tall: Hispanic Farmers

Presenters: Luz Bazan Gutierrez, Rural Community Development Resources, Washington

Success Story #6: Soaring: Native Americans

Presenters: William Burke and Louie Dick, Tiicham Conservation District, Oregon
Richard Thompson and Richard Gooby, Indian Nations Conservation Alliance, Montana
Ronald Harris and Edith Morigeau, NRCS, Washington, DC

Success Story #7: Completing the Circle: Cross Cultural Cooperation

Presenters: Terri Bad Hand and Pati Martinson, Taos County Economic Development Corporation, New Mexico

Partners IV

Ground Rules: Meeting Protocols

This is a working meeting. The focus is on free and frank conversation with meaningful dialogue between representatives of USDA, its Community- and Faith-Based Organization (CBO) partners, and minority serving institutions.

The goal of the meeting is to emerge with a clear idea of what has been accomplished and what still needs to be done, particularly how the Partners and USDA can work together to make substantive, transformative and lasting change in their relationship. In 2007, we will focus on defining the challenges we still face, examining the choices, deciding the change we want, and determining the strategies for arriving at solutions.

We will respect and protect the confidentiality of individual legal proceedings.

In order to ensure honest dialogue and focus on the substance and content of the issues, the record of the meeting will not attribute comments to anyone by name or organization.

In order to reach the goal, participants will stay on track within the framework of the dialogue, and keep to the points and issues at hand.

As time allows, those who wish to speak will be provided time to speak. Priority for participation will be given to participants from CBO's representing farmers, ranchers, farmworkers, rural communities, minority serving institutions, and faith-based organizations. Comments and remarks should be brief. The facilitator may ask an individual to complete his/her comments or remarks if they are longer than three (3) minutes.

Comments should focus on systemic issues and proposed change rather than individual and organizational problems.

Don't let the meeting get personal! Refrain from personal attacks. Keep the focus on collaboration and partnership: what can be done together.

All issues that can't be addressed immediately will be placed in the "parking lot" and addressed in the on-going USDA/Partners dialogue.

USDA and Partners will issue press releases or other public releases on the findings of the meeting, except the final report or proceedings, by mutual agreement.

Sessions will begin and end on time.

During the sessions, cellular telephones are to be turned off or placed in vibration mode. Participants will leave the session to answer cellular phones.

Notes

Notes

**Partners IV - Intro to the 2007
Conversations and Training Sessions**



“Challenge, Choice,
Change:
Solutions That
Strengthen Farming
and Rural
Communities”

Partners IV

Introduction to the 2007 Conversations

The “conversations” format was successfully initiated during the 2005 Partners Meeting, and was repeated and expanded for the 2006 conversations. In both instances, the format received strong positive response from participants. As a result, it has become a core feature of the Partners Meetings.

As has been the tradition, all conversation topics and the questions that frame them have been determined through collaboration between USDA staff, the CBO Partners Planning Committee, and the Solutions Follow-up Team. Conversationalists were recommended by USDA Outreach staff and the Partners Planning Committee, who recruited their respective representatives.

Partners IV features nine (9) conversations, all in response to concerns of Partners. The conversations are as follows:

- #1 National Animal Identification System
- #2 Coordination and Cooperation between Minority-Serving Institutions and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)
- #3 Disaster Preparedness and Policy
- #4 New and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers
- #5 Renewable Energy
- #6 Tracking Equitable Access
- #7 USDA Advisory Committees and Boards
- #8 Risk Management
- #9 Local Foods: Trend or Fad and Role of the Farmer, Community, and USDA

The conversation format features facilitated discussion that is interactive, spirited and promotes participation by the audience and the conversationalists. The facilitator manages the conversation. Each conversation is two (2) hours in length. Prepared visual presentations, such as PowerPoint, are not used during the conversations in order to promote genuine conversation and dialogue; however, handouts are welcome.

A logistics support team, comprised of a moderator, facilitator, reporter, evaluator, room monitor and documentarian, each with specific functions, ensure the effective unfolding of each conversation. Translation (Spanish) and interpretation (hearing impaired) services are also available upon request.

Each conversation is unique. Its unfolding will vary – among other factors - with the subject matter, the number and style of the conversationalists, and the interaction between the facilitator, participants and conversationalists, as well as the degree to which an individual is passionate about the issue being discussed. But, in each case, all dialogue includes a diverse array of both Partners and USDA representatives, allowing participants to gain new perspectives of the myriad issues affecting farm, ranch and rural communities. The conversations format is also an attempt to promote active participation and to break down barriers prevalent in a presenter-audience format.

Partners IV

Introduction to the 2007 Conversations

The conversations are presented in blocks of four (4); a participant must select from one (1) of the four (4) being offered. All participants – from the Partner groups and USDA – are strongly urged to participate in one (1) conversation during each of the two (2) sessions.

First Conversations Session:	Wednesday, August 1, 2006 Conversations #1, #2, #3, and #4 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM
Second Conversations Session:	Thursday, August 2, 2006 Conversations #5, #6, #7, #8, and #9 1:45 PM – 3:45 PM

Reporters and documentarians will keep a record of the discussion held during each conversation. The main points and recommendations for action and follow-up from each conversation will be reported during a report-out session at the closing plenary session.

We thank you for your contribution to this important process. You will be provided many opportunities for evaluation and feedback. We encourage you to submit your ideas for the next Partners Meeting, and the knowledge, experience and insight you or your agency/organization would be prepared to share.



Notes

Notes

The 2007 Conversations



Partners IV - 2007 Conversations

Conversation #1: National Animal Identification System – Protect Your Premises, Livelihood, and Market Access

The threat of a foreign animal disease outbreak or other animal health event in the United States is real. Unfortunately, the timing and severity of an outbreak are impossible to predict.

The National Animal Identification System (NAIS) implemented in 2003 is a modern, streamlined information system that helps producers and animal health officials respond quickly and effectively to animal health events in the United States.

The NAIS program is a voluntary State-Federal-Industry partnership designed to: (1) protect your premises and your livelihood; (2) reduce hardships caused by an animal disease outbreak or other animal health event in your community and; (3) protect your access to markets.

NAIS has many implications for diverse small-scale operations. What would happen if your or your neighbor's livestock contracted or were exposed to Avian Influenza, Mad Cow or some other animal borne or zoonosis diseases? How are these diseases transmitted? How has USDA involved minority and small, limited resource and socially disadvantaged animal and livestock producers in the implementation of NAIS? What will it take to get you involved?

Moderator: Russel Zephier, Board Member, Intertribal Agriculture Council, *Montana*

Conversationalists:

John Wiemers, Senior Staff Officer, NAIS, Veterinary Services, APHIS, *Washington, DC*

Steve Smith, Animal Identification Coordinator, APHIS Veterinary Services, *Washington, DC*

Richard Odom, Animal Identification Coordinator, Virginia Department of Agriculture, *Washington, DC*

Renita Page, Chief Executive Officer, Concentric Management Applications, *North Carolina*

Melvin Crum, Farmer, Rural Advancement Fund, *South Carolina*

Lao Xiong, Executive Director, Hmong American, *Arkansas*

Facilitator: Vince Chapman, Program Analyst, Veterinary Services NAIS Staff, APHIS, *Washington, DC*

Reporter: Sloan Farrell, Equal Employment Specialist, Civil Rights Enforcement & Compliance, APHIS, *Washington, DC*

Evaluator: Alicia Rodriguez, Program Manager, Office of Outreach, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Room Monitor: Versha Kumar, Program Manager, Office of Outreach, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Documentarian: Larry Hartsfield, USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officer, *North Carolina*

Partners IV - 2007 Conversations

Conversation #2: Coordination and Cooperation between Minority-serving Institutions and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)

Information, technical assistance, and access are key assets in ensuring that small, minority, and socially disadvantaged producers possess the necessary skills to maintain viable and sustaining farming operations. Minority-serving institutions and CBOs have historically been dependable sources of enlightenment and strength for those not well served by county, state and Federal programs and systems. However, these entities have not always recognized the value and the important role that each serve in assisting producers.

How can CBOs and minority-serving institutions of higher education collaborate to reduce or remove some of the many barriers that remain to increased participation of small, minority, and socially disadvantaged producers in agriculture? What models exist upon which best practices can be built? How can these institutions of higher learning help develop CBOs and build their capacity? How can myths and misconceptions about the capacity of CBOs held by minority-serving colleges and institutions be dispelled? How can myths and misconceptions about the capacity of minority-serving institutions held by CBOs be dispelled? What dialogue needs to occur? Who are the key participants in this dialogue? What solutions can we begin to derive to create a common ground for collaboration? How can USDA programs foster coordination and cooperation between minority-serving institutions and CBOs? How can CBOs promote programs such as the USDA/1890 National Scholars and the Hispanic Public Service Leaders Programs to attract students to the study of agriculture at minority-serving institutions? How can CBOs and other small, minority and socially disadvantaged producers benefit from these students' knowledge? How can we build trust and confidence in each other? How can CBOs and the Cooperative Extension Service work collaboratively in providing technical assistance and disseminating state of the art information to socially disadvantaged producers? How can complementary outcomes be achieved in addressing the many critical issues impacting the ability of CBOs and small and minority producers? These issues include disaster preparedness, heir property, acquiring land, accessing higher value markets, leadership training, grantsmanship, and maintaining non-profit status.

Moderator: Thelma Floyd, Director, USDA/1890 Programs, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Conversationalists:

John H. Wells, Director, Cooperative Development Programs, RD, *Washington, DC*

Lenora Haynes, USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officer, Tuskegee University, *Alabama*

Dawn Mellion-Patin, Associate Specialist–Agriculture, Southern University, *Louisiana*

Louie Rivers, 2501 Project Manager, Kentucky State University, *Kentucky*

Dorathy Barker, Executive Director, Operation Spring Plant, *North Carolina*

Lupe Garcia, Director, Hispanic Farmers and Ranchers of America, *New Mexico*

Dwight Guy, USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officer, Langston University, *Oklahoma*

George Bennack, Associate Director of Business, University of Texas/Pan American, *Texas*

Facilitator: Clifton E. Peters, USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officers, Alcorn State University, *Mississippi*

Reporter: Rick Chavez, Agency Outreach Coordinator, CSREES, *Washington, DC*

Evaluator: Sharon Colbert, Rural Development Specialist, RD, *Washington, DC*

Room Monitor: Rene Cochise, Program Manager, Cooperative Forestry, FS, *Washington, DC*

Documentarian: Karla A. Martin, USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officer, Delaware State University, *Delaware*

Partners IV - 2007 Conversations

Conversation #3: Disaster Preparedness and Policy

USDA, working with the Department of Interior, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, State Forestry Agencies and others, have developed teams that respond to emergency situations worldwide. This includes 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, tornadoes, tsunamis, wild fires and other disasters. These teams do employ farm workers and small farmers during the busy fire season, primarily in the West. Minority, small farm communities and farmworkers tend to suffer disproportionately in times of disaster.

When a disaster hits our area, what emergency services are available from USDA? What is USDA doing to make these services available nationwide? Who do we contact—at the local level, to get a team to help coordinate activities? What is the status of relief and short and long-term recovery for these populations that are facing bad weather—recurring droughts and other disasters? What are the critical issues relating to response and recovery for farmers and the community at-large? What is being done to address the delays in implementing assistance from the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)? What other programs are available from USDA to assist communities during and after natural disasters? How can the Resource Conservation and Development Councils help local communities prepare for and respond to disasters? What special provisions are made available for USDA borrowers during and after natural disasters? How can CBOs partner with USDA to provide training to farmers and farmworkers to help them prepare and recover from disasters?

Moderator: Arthur Phalo, Outreach Liaison, FS, *Georgia*

Conversationalists:

Justin Huff, USDA Homeland Security Office, *Washington, DC*

John Johnson, Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs, FSA, *Washington, DC*

Heladio F. Zavala, Chief Executive Officer, MAFO, *Minnesota*

Ben Burkett, State Coordinator, Mississippi Association of Cooperatives, *Mississippi*

LoXing Kiatoukaysi, Executive Director, Hmong American Community, Inc., *California*

Brenda Lisi, Disaster Assistance Coordinator, FNS, *Washington, DC*

Dan Lawson, Branch Chief, Conservation & Watershed Planning, NRCS, *Washington, DC*

Facilitator: Hal Brockman, Small Farms Coordinator, FS, *Washington, DC*

Reporter: Larry Holmes, Director, Outreach Division, NRCS, *Washington, DC*

Evaluator: Dan Abeyta, Outreach Coordinator, FSA, *New Mexico*

Room Monitor: Mocile Trotter, OC, *Washington, DC*

Documentarian: Rhonda Brown, RD, *Washington, DC*

Partners IV - 2007 Conversations

Conversation #4: New and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

Aspiring farmers face numerous challenges to achieving their dreams. These include lack of information about financing options and other resources crucial to their success. Retiring farmers need information about proven, innovative ways to keep land in agricultural production while simultaneously meeting financial goals related to retirement and estate planning. Continuing neglect of the entry of new and beginning farmers will compromise the future of the agricultural enterprise; women and immigrant farmers are the fastest growing source of new entrants. One of the potential barriers to entry for new farmers is rising farmland values and their effect on the capital costs of acquiring an efficient farm operation. The average age of primary farm operators continues to rise, increasing by nearly 5 years from 50.5 in 1982 to 55.3 in 2002. Many socially disadvantaged, limited-resource, and small and beginning farmers desire technical expertise in order to achieve financially sound farming operations.

What are the new incentives that have been developed to attract new and beginning farmers? What are the major barriers for new and beginning farmers to get started in agriculture? Are FSA and local bank requirements and procedures conducive to helping the beginning farmer? What training programs are specifically geared to the needs of the beginning farmer? Is there an organized process such as a land bank that identifies available land for lease or purchase? Are there adequate provisions to deal with language and cultural differences? Since many beginning farmers farm on smaller tracts close to urban areas, are urban growth and development making it more difficult to find land at an economical price? Are there examples where jurisdictions have passed laws, such as establishing an urban growth boundary, as a way to maintain land in agriculture? Do traditional agencies reach out to get help from CBOs that are likely to have ties and knowledge of their community and the new farmers? Because many new farmers do intensive vegetable farming on smaller tracts, how are they made aware of and who assists them with various market options? Where are some examples whereby the small farmer has succeeded because of a creative or unusual practice related to financing, acquiring land, an area of production and/or marketing strategy?

Moderator: Nou Vang, Executive Director, Hmong National Development, *Washington, DC*

Conversationalists:

Mark Falcone, Deputy Director, Farm Loan Programs, Loan Making Division, FSA, *Washington, DC*

Alfonzo Drain, Director, USDA Small Farms Coordination, NASS, *Washington, DC*

Janie Hipp, National Program Leader, Risk Management, CSREES, *Washington, DC*

Ly Vang, Executive Director, Association for the Advancement of Hmong American Women, *Minnesota*

Maria Alvarez, Farmer/Consultant, National Immigrant Farming Initiative, *New York*

Wade Ross, Chairperson, Texas Small Farmers & Ranchers, *Texas*

Facilitator: William "Bill" Scaggs, Program Manager, Office of Diversity, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Reporter: Winona Lake Scott, Management and Program Analyst, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Evaluator: Jorge Comas, Small Farms Coordinator, FSA, *Washington, DC*

Room Monitor: Rozier Crew, Outreach Coordinator, RD (retired), *Virginia*

Documentarian: Doris Newton, Economist, ERS, *Washington, DC*

Partners IV - 2007 Conversations

Conversation #5: Renewable Energy

Concerns over the cost, supply and security of petroleum, along with awareness of the effects of carbon emissions into the atmosphere have dramatically increased public awareness of bioenergy. Bioenergy is defined as any form of energy derived from renewable biomass; including fuels, heat and electricity. The Federal government largely supports greater bioenergy research, development, and capital investment by agricultural producers and small businesses. Indeed, the steep increase from 1 billion gallons of domestic ethanol produced in 2000 to the current level of 6 billion gallons per year is a dramatic indication of the successful expansion of the domestic ethanol market. Diversification of American agriculture to include the production of bioenergy feedstocks presents many opportunities and challenges.

Increased use of grain crops as a feedstock for ethanol production stands to raise grain prices. Could this increase the cost of food and feed (for livestock)? What research is being done to address this situation? Dried Distillers' Grains (DDGS) are a by-product of corn grain to ethanol processing and can be used in some part as a substitute for corn in livestock diets. What research is underway in this area? Ethanol production from corn grain is limited to only a small fraction of the country's liquid fuel needs. What new ideas are USDA research scientists working on to expand biofuel feedstocks beyond corn grain? Wind and solar seem abundant. What about improving these energy alternatives for agriculture? Will domestic biofuel production on a large scale be a challenge to the country's natural resources? What research is underway to ensure the sustainability of our water and soil resources, for food, feed and fuel? How do we get a plant in our community? How do we get access to contracts to sell our crops to ethanol plants? How can I market my crops for renewable energy? What options are available for nutrient management strategies to produce energy on site? What will GIPSA's role be in differentiating grain inputs for ethanol production and standardizing the testing of the co-products?

Moderator: George Paris, Program Director, Small Farmers Marketing and Education Association, *Alabama*

Conversationalists:

Benjamin Anderson, Acting Administrator for Rural Business Service, RD, *Washington, DC*

Roger K. Conway, Director, Office of Energy Policy and New Uses, *Washington, DC*

Paul Johnson, Agency Energy Coordinator, FS, *Washington, DC*

Marianne Plaus, Chief, Market and Program Analysis Staff, FGIS, GIPSA, *Washington, DC*

Sylvia Montgomery, USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officer, Virginia State University, *Virginia*

Philip Barker, Owner/Farmer, Operation Spring Plant, *North Carolina*

Richard Gooby, Executive Director, Indian Nations Conservation Alliance, *Montana*

Paul Reaves, Chief Executive Officer, One World Energy Group, *Massachusetts*

Facilitator: Archie Hart, Special Assistant to the Commissioner, NC Department of Agriculture, *North Carolina*

Reporter: Rhonda Brown, FBCI Coordinator/Agency Outreach Coordinator, RD, *Washington, DC*

Evaluator: Cheryl Bailey, Agency Outreach Coordinator, FS, *Washington, DC*

Room Monitor: Velma Charles-Shannon, Environmental Justice Coordinator, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Documentarians: Beverly Smith, FS & Zakkayas Villegas, Student Intern, FS, *Washington, DC*

Partners IV - 2007 Conversations

Conversation #6: Tracking Equitable Access

Access to USDA programs and services continues to be an issue for small, minority, limited resource producers and rural communities. This recurring theme impacts the sustainability of new, beginning, refugee, and veteran farmers and ranchers. Most USDA programs are based on perceived need. While these programs contribute and provide assistance to many communities, it is not clear that they are addressing the most important needs in rural America. The changing demographics, economic opportunities, increased communication, and the multitude of other social and economic factors in defining rural America have increased the need to establish systems for objective and continuous monitoring of program impacts on rural America.

How are local communities and agencies able to effectively deal with language and cultural differences among its farmers? Are USDA agencies aware of and involve CBOs that have the language skills and cultural knowledge that could help them better understand and serve these populations? Are Federal and State agencies able to provide support in terms of translating key documents for use, particularly in areas with high numbers of persons with limited English skills? Are local officials sensitive to the needs of the new populations or do they prefer to work with the same clients as 10 years ago? Is there a committee or group that represents the interests of all producers in a community and takes a holistic view of the needs and services in a community? Does this group identify needs and challenges perhaps unique to that community that need to be solved in order to maximize the potential of the producers and agriculture as a whole? What type of training programs should be done at various levels to promote better understanding of the barriers faced by clients and to effectively transmit information to these clients? Are resources inadequate so that local organizations do not have sufficient time to deal with all of its potential clients? What examples can be cited in which local USDA or other organizations have developed programs that effectively reach out to persons with language and cultural differences? What are the measurement methods used to assess the ability of the wide variety of programs to meet the needs of the targeted audiences? How are the outcomes of grants, direct loans, loan guarantees, and direct technical assistance to the beneficiaries being reported? What is the regularity of the report? Do local officials remain tuned in to new market realities in their area and how do they utilize this information to help farmers? Why is the Census of Agriculture important to small, minority, and limited resource producers? What is the timeline of activities for conducting the Census of Agriculture? What assistance can CBOs provide to help insure accurate census results?

Moderator: Rhonda Davis, Director, Performance and Planning, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Conversationalists:

Ken Nagel, Field Operations Manager, FSA, *Washington, DC*

Charles Smith, Office of Outreach, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Ray Garibay, Staff Director, Marketing and Information Services Office, NASS, *Washington, DC*

Dennis, Kopp, Assistant Administrator for Program and Analysis, CSREES, *Washington, DC*

Dionne Toombs, National Program Leader for Integrated Programs, CSREES, *Washington, DC*

Lou Ann Kling, Project Administrator, National Tribal Development Association, *Montana*

Lorette Piciano, Executive Director, Rural Coalition/Coalicion Rural, *Washington, DC*

Lydia Villanueva, Director, CASA del Llano, Inc., *Texas*

Beverly Collins-Hall, Director, American Indian Mothers, Inc., *North Carolina*

Facilitator: Alfonzo Drain, Director, USDA Small Farms Coordination, NASS, *Washington, DC*

Reporter: Sheila Bryant, USDA Small Farms Coordinator, NASS, *Washington, DC*

Evaluator: Jose Osegueda, Hispanic Program Manager, Office of Diversity, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Room Monitor: Lisa M. Mason, Program Marketing Specialist, Office of Outreach, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Documentarian: Jack Nelson, African American Program Manager, Office of Diversity, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Partners IV - 2007 Conversations

Conversation #7: USDA Advisory Committees and Boards

Membership on USDA Advisory Committees and Boards is a key avenue for accessing and influencing programs and services that are vital to small and minority farmers.

How can USDA agencies with advisory committees and boards work with CBOs and other minority-serving organizations to increase access using this strategy? What have been the barriers to minority participation, and how can these be eliminated? What agencies have advisory committees and boards, and how many are mandated by statute? What are purposes of these committees and boards? How are members recruited? What is the process for increasing minority membership? What is the customary membership tenure? What are the tasks required of CBOs to ensure their members are nominated and qualified to serve? What collaborative strategies can CBOs and minority-serving institutions employ to ensure receipt of more minority nominations?

Moderator: Carmen Humphrey, Team Leader, Marketing Services Branch, AMS/TM, *Washington, DC*

Conversationalists:

Kenneth Johnson, Regional Manager, DC Marketing Field Office, Marketing Order Administration Branch, AMS, *Washington, DC*

Michelle Moore, Assistant to the Deputy Administrator, Office of Negotiations & Agreements, FAS, *Washington, DC*

David Shipman, Deputy Administrator, Federal Grain Inspection Service, GIPSA, *Washington, DC*

Mark Rose, Assistant State Conservationist, Programs, NRCS, *Maryland*

Thelma Strong, Director, Office of Regulatory & Management Service, FS, *Washington, DC*

Mark Falcone, Deputy Director, Farm Loan Programs, Loan Making Division, FSA, *Washington, DC*

Rudy Arredondo, HOLA/National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association, *Washington, DC*

Calvin King, Sr., President/Chief Executive Officer, Arkansas Land and Farm Development, Inc., *Arkansas*

Chukou Thao, Executive Director, National Hmong American Farmers, Inc., *California*

Facilitator: Arthur Neal, Director of Program Administration, National Organic Program, AMS, *Washington, DC*

Reporter: Edwin Lewis, Civil Rights Outreach Manager, FAS, *Washington, DC*

Evaluator: Linda Brown, Agricultural Marketing Specialist, AMS, *Washington, DC*

Room Monitor: Karl Hacker, Agricultural Marketing Specialist, AMS, *Washington, DC*

Documentarian: Terri Henry, Management Analyst, Management Support Staff, GIPSA, *Washington, DC*

Partners IV - 2007 Conversations

Conversation #8: Risk Management

Risk is an important aspect of the farming business. The uncertainties of weather, yields, prices, government policies, global markets, and other factors can cause wide swings in farm income.

What is risk? What are the types of risk associated with farming? What strategies can be employed to help individuals learn how to manage risk? What government programs assist managing risk? What is the Adjusted Gross Revenue Lite (AGR-Lite) Program? How can the program be used by small producers? How can CBOs and USDA help small and minority producers more effectively **choose among** alternatives that reduce the financial effects of such uncertainties and manage a variety of risks, including risk associated with estate planning, financial risk through record keeping, production risk through plasticulture, and risk associated with organic production?

Moderator: Ron Brown, Eastern Regional Outreach Specialist, RMA, *North Carolina*

Conversationalists:

Eldon Gould, Administrator, RMA, *Washington, DC*

Philip Farland, Advisor, North Carolina Minority Cooperatives, *North Carolina*

Marian Simon, Project Director, Kentucky State University, *Kentucky*

Willard Tillman, Executive Director, Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project, *Oklahoma*

Luz Gutierriz, Executive Director, Rural Community Development Resources, *Washington*

Karen Adler, Mentoring Program Director, Georgia Organics, *Georgia*

Facilitator: Rick Lopez, State Executive Director, FSA, *New Mexico*

Reporter: Eric Stout, USDA/1890 Liaison Officer, Kentucky State University, *Kentucky*

Evaluator: Shellea N. Worsley-Price, Program Specialist, USDA/1890 Programs, *Washington, DC*

Room Monitor: John Jefferson, Southeast Regional Outreach Coordinator, FSA, *Washington, DC*

Documentarian: Stephanie Koziski, 1994 Program Analyst, USDA/1994 Programs, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Partners IV - 2007 Conversations

Conversation #9: Local Foods: Trend or Fad and Role of the Farmer, Community, and USDA

Due in large part to increased consumer demand and broader concerns from the American public about where and how food is grown, the demand for organic, sustainable, specialty and locally grown foods, is exploding. In the last decade alone, 1,250 new farmers markets have opened across the country, school districts in 32 states are procuring local foods for school meal programs, and an estimated 1,200 Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) enterprises, in addition to hundreds of community gardens and urban based agriculture programs, are flourishing.

Given these trends, what exactly does local foods/regional foods mean? Is there really a movement underway? If so, how significant is it? If there is indeed a movement, what strategies, programs and investments (examples from production—post harvesting—to marketing) are CBOs across the country implementing to strengthen the so-called movement? What challenges are they facing? How are producers, particularly minorities (i.e. refugee, immigrant and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers) engaging with local and regional food movements? What are their specific challenges, barriers or obstacles to success? How can USDA, other Federal agencies, and foundations help minority and limited-resource farmers engage profitably with local/regional food networks? What technical and financial assistance is available to underserved agricultural producers and what partnerships with CBOs are in place?

Moderator: Shirley Sherrod, State Director, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, *Georgia*

Conversationalists:

Glen Hill, Executive Director, Minnesota Food Association, *Minnesota*

Phanat Vang, Southeast Asian Coordinator, Minnesota Food Association, *Minnesota*

Blong Lee, Program Coordinator, Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission, *California*

Larry Laverentz, Program Manager, Office of Refugee Resettlement, *Washington, DC*

Bernadine Prince, Co-Director, FreshFarm Markets, *Washington, DC*

Debra Tropp, Team Leader, Marketing Services Branch/TM AMS, *Washington, DC*

Maria Moreira, Director, Flats Mentor Farms, *Massachusetts*

Pamela Kelly Phillips, Director, Consumer & Community Affairs (Outreach), FNS, *Washington, DC*

Facilitator: Ben Turner, Program Manager, ISED, *Washington, DC*

Reporter: Geraldine Herring, Program Manager, Office of Outreach, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Evaluator: Rosannah Taylor, Small Farms Coordinator, USDA Small Farms Coordination, *Washington, DC*

Room Monitor: Kathryn Hill, Agency Outreach Coordinator, Office of Communications, *Washington, DC*

Documentarian: Lauren Serpe, Development and Marketing Assistant, ISED, *Washington, DC*

The 2007 Training Sessions



Partners IV

Introduction to the 2007 Training Sessions

Partners IV marks the introduction of training sessions to the conference agenda. These sessions are conducted by USDA and land-grant university staff credentialed in the training subject. In 2007, there are five (5) training sessions:

#1: FSA: Servicing Options for Financially Distressed Borrowers

#2: Conservation Programs 101

#3: Collective Marketing: Producing a Safe, Consistent, Reliable, High Quality
Product for the Modern Market

#4: Speciality Crops for Niche Markets

#5: Grantsmanship and E-gov

Training Sessions #1-4 will be held in two different time blocks; Session #5 will be held once as shown below:

First Training Session	Wednesday, August 1, 2007 Sessions #1, #2, #3, #4 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM
Second Training Session	Thursday, August 2, 2007 Sessions #1, #2, #3, #4 10:30 AM to Noon
Third Training Session	Thursday, August 2, 2007 Session #5 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM

We urge participants to take advantage of these training opportunities.

Partners IV

2007 Training Session

Session #1: FSA: Servicing Options for Financially Distressed Borrowers

An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure! This session will provide a review of the loan servicing processes for FSA borrowers who may become financially distressed or who may already be delinquent. Among the subjects to be discussed are servicing options available for borrowers so they can continue to farm. It will also identify ways to exit a farm operation.

Moderator: Carlton Lewis, Branch Manager, Program Compliance, Civil Rights, RD, *Washington, DC*

Presenters:

Carolyn Cooksie, Deputy Administrator for Farm Loan Programs, FSA, *Washington, DC*
James D. Rowe, Branch Chief, Direct Loan Servicing, FSA, *Washington, DC*

Documentarians:

Neal Leonard, USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officer, *Georgia*
Kurt Gardner, USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officer, *Alabama*

Session #2: Conservation Programs 101

The primary focus of the Natural Resources Conservation Service is to ***Help People, Help the Land*** through various conservation programs and practices that assist you to conserve, promote and protect the quality of life through our stewardship efforts in our environment. Do you have soil erosion and wildlife concerns? Do you know your soil type? Do you know your livestock water supply needs? Do you have water quality problems? What are your conservation resource needs? Do you have a conservation plan? This workshop will focus on the conservation planning process that will be of benefit to you and how the various conservation programs can help you address your natural resource concerns.

Moderator: Sonya Neal Reeves, Natural Resources Conservation Service, *Washington, DC*

Presenters:

Cornelius "Gus" Jordan, Branch Chief, Conservation Improvement Programs Branch NRCS, *Washington, DC*
Ronald Harris, Team Leader, Community & Rural Assistance Team, NRCS, *Washington, DC*
Gary Wynn, Sr., District Conservationist, NRCS, *Maryland*

Documentarians:

George Richardson, USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officer, *Arkansas*
Dwight Guy, USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officer, *Oklahoma*

Partners IV

2007 Training Session

Session #3: Collective Marketing: Producing a Safe, Consistent, Reliable, High Quality Product for the Modern Market

"We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately." These words uttered by Benjamin Franklin more than 200 years ago are as appropriate for today's small farm community, especially Socially Disadvantaged Producers (SDP's), as they were then. Just as the individual States benefited from creating a combined front, SDP's can band together to create 'production and marketing groups' to compete in the modern marketplace.

How can USDA assist SDP's to coordinate their production and marketing? The Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS) offers a variety of programs (i.e. grading services, Good Agricultural Practices and Good Handling Practices Certifications) which can assist new market entrants achieve instant credibility in the commercial marketplace. Rural Development (RD) can support the development of New Generation Co-ops and Limited Liability Companies that can enable SDP's to coordinate their efforts.

This workshop will focus on the various AMS and RD programs which local producers can utilize to compete in the modern marketplace.

Moderator: Scott B. Mexic, Director, Center for Minority Farmers, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Presenters:

LeeAnn M. Oliver, Deputy Administrator, Cooperative Programs, RD, *Washington, DC*

Eric Forman, Associate Deputy Administrator, Fruits and Vegetable Programs, AMS, *Washington, DC*

James Davis, Farmer, Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation, *Arkansas*

Documentarians:

Kavin Johnson, Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist, Civil Rights, RD, *Washington, DC*

Horace Hodge, USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officers, *Texas*

Session #4: Specialty Crops for Niche Markets

Sometimes it is necessary to take the time to understand the production system so a niche market can be filled. This session will provide an overview of factors that contribute to successful production of specialty crops for niche markets.

Moderator: Aisha Cruz, Texas/Mexico Border Coalition, *Texas*

Presenter: Vincent M. Russo, Plant Physiologist, ARS, *Oklahoma*

Documentarians:

Lisa Purnell, Program Analyst, ARS, *Washington, DC*

Ternechue Butler, Mediation Program Manager, FSA, *Washington, DC*

Partners IV

2007 Training Session

Session #5: Grantsmanship and E-Gov

This training is designed for both novice and experienced grants seekers. This workshop will cover all aspects of searching for grants, writing funding proposals, and negotiating with funding sources. You will leave this workshop with new skills and the ability to apply those skills to the needs of your organization. Topics will include:

- Interpreting instructions and requirements
- Understanding the politics of government funding
- Finding grants specifically for your organization
- Unscrambling goals, objectives and outcomes
- Designing a program evaluation
- Budgeting direct and indirect costs
- Grantmaking for faith-based and other current funding sources

Also, the latest developments in electronic grants, the best values in online grant directories, how E-gov initiatives impact CBO's, and what is most important for the newcomer to grants.

Moderator: Terri Bad Hand, Taos County Economic Development Corporation, *New Mexico*

Presenters:

Debra Sheeley, Integrated Program Director, CSREES, *Washington, DC*

Mary Campanola, Financial Analyst, RD, *Washington, DC*

William Kenney, Program Manager, OCIO, *Washington, DC*

Margaret Krome, Policy Program Director, Michael Fields Agriculture Institute, Wisconsin

Documentarians:

Yolanda Garcia, Director, USDA/1994 Programs, ASCR, *Washington, DC*

Ahmad Jilani, USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officer, *Maryland*

The Partners

Partners IV

Brief History of the Partners Meeting

In March 2003, USDA established the position of Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR), a result of a provision in the 2002 Farm Bill strongly supported by community-based organizations (CBOs) that serve small farmers and farmworkers. Soon thereafter, in April 2003, USDA appointed the first ASCR. The new Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights became the central point for the Department's civil rights dimension, bringing like functions under a common umbrella. Thus, the staffs of the Office of Civil Rights (now the Office of Adjudication and Compliance), the Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center, the Office of Outreach, along with the Offices of USDA/1890 and 1994 Programs, became part of the new office.

The new office worked closely with staff, internal partners, and CBO partners to initiate several innovative strategies to open dialogue with limited-resource and underserved farmers and ranchers across the United States. These included listening sessions, where the ASCR convened meetings across the Nation with representatives of African American, Latino, Asian American/Pacific Islander, and American Indian farm and ranch organizations in communities where they lived and worked to hear their deeply held and passionate concerns. These early sessions provided a “space” for CBO representatives and the ASCR staff to begin working together to tackle the tough issues faced in providing equitable access to USDA programs.

The ASCR staff and the CBO partners, many of whom had worked together externally for many years, sought opportunities to focus on resolving specific issues. In the summer of 2003, a group of CBOs convened in Washington, DC, to meet with the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights and the then USDA Secretary. The idea was advanced that USDA should find ways to interact with the CBO constituency as a group. In April 2004, USDA and the partners jointly convened a “stakeholders” meeting. Representatives of CBOs helped to develop the agenda and participated in a 1-day meeting in Washington, DC, which provided an opportunity for more than 50 small farm and minority stakeholders to meet with USDA agency administrators and program staff to discuss USDA programs and services. A second such meeting was held in August 2004. The result was that participants felt the meeting process masked the real issues and failed to advance dialogue to the satisfaction of anyone. Subsequently, USDA and the partners worked for more than a year to determine how best to proceed.

The partners pointed out that while USDA had formal relationships with many other entities, it lacked any formal or informal mechanism to work with CBO partners. As a result, a planning team and Outreach staff re-conceptualized the stakeholders' event as a working meeting of partners. They elected to focus on building a relationship of mutual respect, honesty, and a desire to work on ending long-standing issues that separated USDA from some of its constituents. “Conversations”—reasoned civil discourse—would be the keystone for the meeting.

Partners IV

Brief History of the Partners Meeting

Thus since 2005, the Annual Partners Meetings have become a signature program of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights and USDA. These meetings give representatives of CBOs, including faith-based organizations, USDA administrators, headquarters and field staffs, and representatives of minority-serving institutions, an opportunity to exchange ideas and explore solutions to challenges faced by traditionally underserved farmers, ranchers, and rural communities. The meetings also serve as a “call to action” for leaders of CBOs to work with USDA’s administrators and their staffs to propose and think through issues that can be used to develop policies and practices that impact the underserved and to work collaboratively toward these ends.

In sum, since the first meeting in April 2004, the meeting has evolved into a remarkable journey, benchmarked by continuous year-round dialog among representatives of community-, faith-based, tribal, immigrant and refugee organizations, minority-serving institutions of higher education, Federal, state and local USDA administrators, and outreach staff. The Partners Meetings serve as both a point of departure and a culminating event.

The 2007 Partners Meeting has a four-fold purpose to: (1) continue the dialogue that has emanated from the 2005 and 2006 Partners Meetings; (2) continue the annual forum through which USDA Agency Heads and their staffs hear the voices and concerns of underserved constituents; (3) broaden understanding of the depth and scope of USDA programs and services; and (4) underscore several successful cooperative efforts that have resulted in enhanced well-being for small and minority farmers and ranchers.

Beginning with the 2007 conference, three new features have been added: (1) an award to a CBO and a USDA agency for outstanding outreach effort, (2) training sessions on critical programs/issues affecting the capacity to farm, and (3) success stories of collaborative effort that has transformed the lives of underserved producers.

And so it was, and so it is.

Partners IV - 2007

Participating CBO Partners

• African American Family Farmers	GA	• North Carolina Coalition of Farm and Rural Families	NC
• American Heartland Produce	AR	• North Carolina Willing Workers	NC
• American Indian Mothers	NC	• North Central Growers Cooperative of North Carolina	NC
• Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation	AR	• Northern Tennessee Farmers Association	TN
• Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association	NC	• Northumberland County Community Center	VA
• Black Small Farmer Association	KY	• Oaks Indian School	OK
• Blackfeet Community College	MT	• Oklahoma Black Farmers Association	OK
• Bullock/Barbour Farmers Organization	AL	• Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project	OK
• California Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association	CA	• One World Energy Group	MA
• CASA del Llano	TX	• Operation Spring Plant	NC
• CMC Cooperative	NC	• Penn Center Small Farmer Cooperative	SC
• Concentric Management Applications	NC	• Pequenos Agricultores de California	CA
• Cottage House Women's Farmers Organization	AL	• Phoenix Youth and Family Services	AZ
• Cox Brothers' Farms	NC	• Rural Advancement Fund	SC
• Economic Expansion Project of South Texas	AR	• Rural Coalition	DC
• Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund	TX	• Rural Community Development Resources	WA
• Five Star Family Co-Op	GA	• Sandhills Family Heritage Association	NC
• Flats Mentor Farm	NC	• Science Applications International Corporation	VA
• Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission	MA	• Silas H. Hunt CDC	AR
• Georgia Organics	CA	• Small Farmers Marketing and Education Association	AL
• Hispanic Farmers and Ranchers of America	GA	• Southeast Asian American Farmers Association	AR
• Hmong American Community	NM	• Southeastern Appalachian Rural Alliance	WV
• Hmong American	CA	• Southern Alternatives	GA
• HMONG National Development	DC	• Taos County Economic Development Corporation	NM
• HOLA/National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association	AZ	• Texas Landowner Association	TX
• Indian Nations Conservation Alliance	DC	• Texas Small Farmers & Ranchers	TX
• Institute for Social and Economic Development	MT	• Texas/Mexico Border Coalition	TX
• Intertribal Agriculture Council	DC	• Twin Rivers Small Farmers Cooperative	NC
• Kentucky Minority Farmers Association	MT	• United Farmers USA	SC
• M. Davila Farms	KY	• United Growers	WA
• Macon County Farmers Market	TX	• United Hmong Association	NC
• Macon County Farmers Organization	AL	• Urban Rural Learning Lenkage Living Institute Interwatch	VA
• MAFO: United Migrant Opportunity Services	AL	• West Alabama Farmer's Association	AL
• Manzaneros Mexicanos de Washington	MN	• Winston County Self Help Co-op	MS
• Michigan Coalition of Black Farmers	WA	• Woodinville Valley Farm	WA
• Michigan Food & Farming Systems	MI	• Youth Development and Capacity Building	GA
• Minnesota Food Association	MI	• First Baptist Church	VA
• Minority Agricultural Producers Cooperative	MN	• Howland Chapel Futuristic Outreach	MD
• Minority Cooperatives in North Carolina	TX	• Human Services Programs of Carroll County	MD
• Minority Landowner Magazine	NC	• Life and Liberty	PA
• Mississippi Association of Cooperatives	NC	• Mennonite Economic Development Association	PA
• Mississippi Faith-Based Coalition for Community Renewal	MS	• Sisters in Unity Ministries	VA
• Moore's Farm	MS	• Step Up To Success	VA
• National Congress of American Indians	NC	• ViLDOn Entertainment	MD
• National Hmong American Farmers	DC	• Licea Farm / Manzaneros Mexicanos de Washington	WA
• National Immigrant Farming Initiative	CA	• Sacrificio Non-Profit Corporation	TX
• National Tribal Development Association	NY	• Tiicham Conservation District	OR

Partners IV - 2007

Participating Universities Partners

1890 Universities

Alabama A&M University	AL
Alcorn State University	MS
Delaware State University	DE
Fort Valley State University	GA
Kentucky State University	KY
Langston University	OK
North Carolina A&T State University	NC
Prairie View A&M University	TX
Southern University and A& M College	LA
South Carolina State University	SC
Tuskegee University	AL
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff	AR
University of Maryland Eastern Shore	MD
Virginia State University	VA

1994 Universities

Dine Beina College
Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College

Other

Michigan State University Extension
University of Texas/Pan American



Partners IV

U.S. Department of Agriculture

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CIVIL RIGHTS (ASCR)

ASCR's mission is to facilitate the fair and equitable treatment of USDA customers and employees, while ensuring the delivery and enforcement of civil rights programs and activities. ASCR ensures compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies for USDA customers and employees regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital or familial status, political beliefs, parental status, protected genetic information, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all bases apply to all programs.)

<http://www.usda.gov/cr/index.html>

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE (AMS)

AMS facilitates the strategic marketing of agricultural products in domestic and international markets while ensuring fair trading practices and promoting a competitive and efficient marketplace. AMS constantly works to develop new marketing services to increase customer satisfaction.

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/>

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE (ARS)

ARS is USDA's principal in-house research agency. ARS leads America towards a better future through agricultural research and information.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/main/main.htm>

ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE (APHIS)

APHIS provides leadership in ensuring the health and care of animals and plants. The agency improves agricultural productivity and competitiveness and contributes to the national economy and the public health.

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/>

CENTER FOR NUTRITION POLICY AND PROMOTION (CNPP)

CNPP works to improve the health and well-being of Americans by developing and promoting dietary guidance that links scientific research to the nutrition needs of consumers.

<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/>

Partners IV

U.S. Department of Agriculture

COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND EXTENSION SERVICE (CSREES)

In partnership with land-grant universities, and other public and private organizations, CREES provides the focus to advance a global system of extramural research, extension, and higher education in the food and agricultural sciences.

<http://www.csrees.usda.gov/>

ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE (ERS)

ERS is USDA's principal social science research agency. Each year, ERS communicates research results and socioeconomic indicators via briefings, analyses for policymakers and their staffs, market analysis updates, and major reports.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/>

FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA)

FSA implements agricultural policy, administers credit and loan programs, and manages conservation, commodity, disaster and farm marketing programs through a national network of offices.

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/>

FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE (FNS)

FNS increases food security and reduces hunger in partnership with cooperating organizations by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthy diet, and nutrition education in a manner that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/default.htm>

FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE (FSIS)

FSIS enhances public health and well-being by protecting the public from foodborne illness and ensuring that the nation's meat, poultry and egg products are safe, wholesome, and correctly packaged.

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>

Partners IV

U.S. Department of Agriculture

FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE (FAS)

FAS works to improve foreign market access for U.S. products. This USDA agency operates programs designed to build new markets and improve the competitive position of U.S. agriculture in the global marketplace.

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/>

FOREST SERVICE (FS)

FS sustains the health, diversity and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

<http://www.fs.fed.us/>

GRAIN INSPECTION, PACKERS AND STOCK-YARDS ADMINISTRATION (GIPSA)

GIPSA facilitates the marketing of livestock, poultry, meat, cereals, oilseeds, and related agricultural products. It also promotes fair and competitive trading practices for the overall benefit of consumers and American agriculture. GIPSA ensures open and competitive markets for livestock, poultry, and meat by investigating and monitoring industry trade practices.

<http://www.gipsa.usda.gov/>

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE (NASS)

NASS serves the basic agricultural and rural data needs of the country by providing objective, important and accurate statistical information and services to farmers, ranchers, agribusinesses and public officials. This data is vital to monitoring the ever-changing agricultural sector and carrying out farm policy.

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/>

NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS)

NRCS provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain and improve our natural resources and environment.

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Partners IV

U.S. Department of Agriculture

RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY (RMA)

RMA helps to ensure that farmers have the financial tools necessary to manage their agricultural risks. RMA provides coverage through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, which promotes national welfare by improving the economic stability of agriculture.

<http://www.rma.usda.gov/>

RURAL DEVELOPMENT (RD)

RD helps rural areas to develop and grow by offering Federal assistance that improves quality of life. RD targets communities in need and then empowers them with financial and technical resources.

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/>





Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (OASCR) ensures compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies for USDA customers and employees regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital or family status, political beliefs, parental status, protected genetic information, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.



The Office of Outreach and Diversity

Bridge the Gap for Diversity and Inclusion

Office of Outreach and Diversity
Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250, Mail Stop 9473
Telephone: (202) 720-6350

Call 1-800-880-4183 or visit us at www.ascr.usda.gov





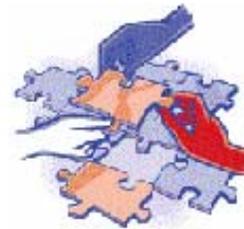
Office of Adjudication and Compliance

(formerly the Office of Civil Rights)

The Office of Adjudication and Compliance ensures that activities and programs within USDA are carried out in accordance with Federal anti-discrimination laws. The Office meets this responsibility through compliance reviews, civil rights training and civil rights policy development. In addition, the Office of Adjudication and Compliance receives and adjudicates complaints of discrimination. The Office manages the Department's EEO complaint process and serves as the liaison with EEOC on compliance related to decisions issued by the EEOC. Complaints of discrimination arising from USDA conducted and Federally-assisted programs are also adjudicated by the Office of Adjudication and Compliance.



Office of Adjudication and Compliance
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-9410
Tel: (202) 260-1026 (local)
(866) 632-9992 (toll free)
(202) 401-0216 (TDD)
Email: cr@usda.gov



Are you looking for a faster way to get a workplace dispute resolved?

Do you need assistance managing differences with a co-worker or your supervisor?

Are you dealing with a difficult peer or employer?

If you answered yes to any of these questions ... Help is Here!!!

Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 4029 -S
Washington, DC 20250-9407
202-720-7664 or 1-888-428-8961 or at
http://www.ascr.usda.gov/usda_employee_adr.html

Any employee involved in a conflict may contact
the Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center for

assistance

Our mission is to increase the prevention and early
resolution of both workplace and program conflicts at
USDA through the enhancement of conflict management
skills and the widespread use of Alternative Dispute
Resolution (ADR).



USDA/1890

NATIONAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

A partnership between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the eighteen 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Institutions



Alabama A&M University
Alcorn State University, Mississippi
Delaware State University
Florida A&M University
Fort Valley State University, Georgia
Kentucky State University
Lincoln University, Missouri
Langston University, Oklahoma
North Carolina A&T State University
Prairie View A&M University, Texas
South Carolina State University
Southern University and A&M College, Louisiana
Tennessee State University
Tuskegee University, Alabama
University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff
University of Maryland-Eastern Shore
Virginia State University
West Virginia State University



Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
USDA/1890 Programs
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Room 3038, South Bldg., Mail Stop 9478
Washington, DC 20250

Telephone Number: (202)205-5692; Fax Number: (202)205-2641

Website: www.ascr.usda.gov/1890programs.html

United States Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

USDA/1994 PROGRAMS (Tribal Colleges and Universities)

The 1994 Land Grant Institutions (Tribal Colleges and Universities)

The 1994 Land Grant Institutions are American Indian tribally controlled colleges and universities that were granted land grant status under an Act of Congress in 1994. The Office of USDA/1994 Programs is the result of a partnership between the USDA's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC).

Office of USDA/1994 Programs

The Office of USDA/1994 Programs was established to develop policy guidelines and procedures; coordinate and oversee further participation in the Department's programs and activities; and monitor, evaluate, and report on agency compliance with policy and Executive Orders to increase participation of 1994 land grant institutions. For more information about this program contact:

Office of USDA/1994 Programs
USDA, Office of the Assistant
Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW,
Room 1034
Washington DC 20250
(202) 205-4490 or (202) 720-1772
www.usda.ascr.gov



Tribal Colleges and Universities

The thirty-one Tribal Colleges and Universities are located primarily in the Northern Plains, Northwest, and Southwest United States. They are:

- * Bay Mills Community College, Brimley, Michigan
- * Blackfeet Community College, Browning, Montana
- * Cankdeska Cikana Comm. College, Fort Totten, North Dakota
- * Chief Dull Knife College, Lama Deer, Montana
- * College of Menominee Nation, Keshena, Wisconsin
- * Diné College, Tsaile, Arizona
- * Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College, Cloquet, Minnesota
- * Fort Belknap College, Harlem, Montana
- * Fort Berthold Community College, New Town, North Dakota
- * Fort Peck Community College, Poplar, Montana
- * Haskell Indian Nations University, Lawrence, Kansas
- * Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico
- * Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College, Hayward, Wisconsin
- * Leech Lake Tribal College, Cass Lake, Minnesota
- * Little Big Horn College, Crow Agency, Montana
- * Little Priest Tribal College, Winnebago, Nebraska
- * Navajo Technical Institute, Crownpoint, New Mexico
- * Nebraska Indian Community College, Macy, Nebraska
- * Northwest Indian College, Bellingham, Washington
- * Oglala Lakota College, Kyle, South Dakota
- * Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College, Mount Pleasant, Michigan
- * Salish Kootenai College, Pablo, Montana
- * Sinte Gleska University, Mission, South Dakota
- * Sisseton Wahpeton College, Sisseton, South Dakota
- * Sitting Bull College, Fort Yates, North Dakota
- * Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, Albuquerque, New Mexico
- * Stone Child College, Box Elder, Montana
- * Tohono O'odham Comm. College, Sells, Arizona
- * Turtle Mountain Community College, Belcourt, North Dakota
- * United Tribes Technical College, Bismarck, North Dakota
- * White Earth Tribal & Community College, Mahanomen, Minnesota

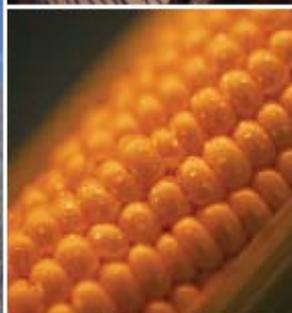
USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Our mission is to facilitate the strategic marketing of agricultural products in domestic and international markets, while ensuring fair trading practices and promoting a competitive and efficient marketplace, to the benefit of producers, traders, and consumers of U.S. food and fiber products.

For more information about AMS, visit our Web site at:

www.ams.usda.gov.



United States Department of Agriculture



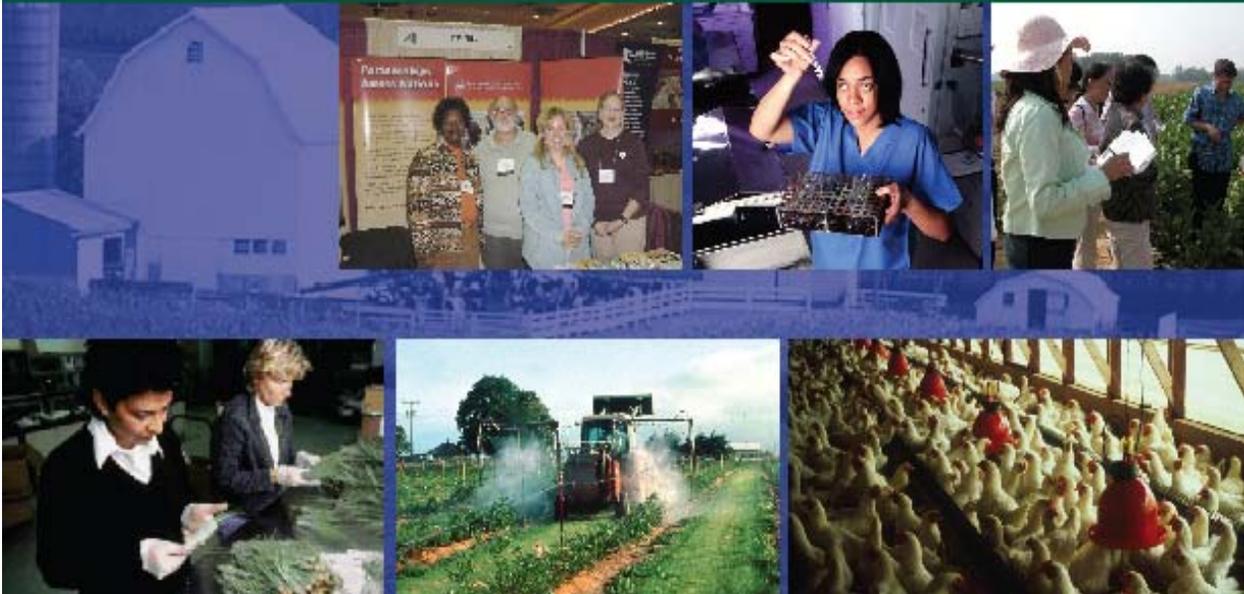
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Protecting American Agriculture

Fourth Annual
Partners Meeting

July 31 - August 3, 2007

"Protecting American agriculture" is the basic charge of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

APHIS provides leadership in ensuring the health and care of animals and plants. The agency improves agricultural productivity and competitiveness and contributes to the national economy and the public health.



RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS AGENCIES

of the U.S. Department of Agriculture



The Research, Education, and Economics (REE) Mission Area of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) promotes the well-being of American agriculture, consumers, and rural residents. Each agency makes unique contributions to the overall effort, working together to create basic research knowledge at the frontiers of the biological, physical, and social sciences; applying knowledge in innovative ways to address problems and issues; promoting commercial development and timely transfer of new knowledge and technologies to users; educating and informing the Nation's public and private decision makers; and strengthening higher education to develop the skills of the Nation's evolving workforce. The four agencies under the REE Mission Area are:



The Agricultural Research Service (ARS)

www.ars.usda.gov



The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES)

www.csrees.usda.gov



The Economic Research Service (ERS)

www.ers.usda.gov



NASS

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

www.nass.usda.gov

Sponsored by
The Office of Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity
A Division of ARS Administrative and Financial Management

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service



The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) works to increase people's knowledge to improve agriculture, families, communities, and the environment. In association and partnership with all Land-Grant Universities in each state and the U.S. Territories, the Extension Service makes available educational programs to all residents.

The Extension Service supports national programs spanning 60 disciplines including: youth development, 4-H, family, food, nutrition, health, community economic and development, agriculture and natural resources in nearly 3,000 local cooperative extension offices nationwide.

In addition, CSREES manages competitive grant programs that enable scientists, and community-based organizations (CBOs) throughout the nation to conduct high impact projects related to agriculture, food, health, the environment, families, and communities. Through grants offered by CSREES, the USDA enables researchers throughout the United States to solve problems critical to our farmers, consumers, and communities. CSREES is USDA's major extramural research agency that funds individuals, institutions and public, private, and non-profit organizations.

Through all these activities, CSREES positively impacts the lives of millions of Americans. Contact your local Extension Office for more details. Go to www.csrees.usda and click on "local extension office" under "more quick links."





The United States Department of Agriculture
Economic Research Service
The Economics of Food, Farming, Natural Resources, and Rural America



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ERS examines the critical agriculture-related issues of today...

- Agricultural trade
- Conservation and environment
- Farm and commodity policy
- Farm income and costs
- Food and nutrition assistance
- Food safety
- Organic farming and marketing
- Rural income and welfare
- Structure of the farm and food sectors

...and helps you make decisions affecting tomorrow.

About ERS

The Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, provides timely research and analysis on topics related to food, agriculture, the environment, and rural communities. ERS analysts examine the economic effects of current farm legislation on producers, consumers, taxpayers and rural communities, and evaluate potential effects of alternative policies and programs.

ERS research is published in print and on the Internet in ERS research reports and in *Amber Waves* magazine, which is published five times per year.

All ERS products—magazines, research reports, data, and market analysis reports—are available on the ERS website at www.ers.usda.gov.

www.ers.usda.gov

FSA Outreach Office -
Serving the Agricultural Needs of
Women, Minority, Disadvantaged
and Limited Resource Farmers
and Ranchers



We offer a variety of programs
and services. Which program or
service is right for you?

- Farm Loans (Direct/Guaranteed, Operating/ Ownership, Youth and Beginning Farmers' Loans)
- Special Lending Programs
- Loan Deficiency Payments
- Agricultural Marketing Assistance
- Agricultural Payment Assistance
- Agricultural Risk Management
- Confidential Mediation Dispute Resolution
- Conservation, Environmental and Natural Resources
- Dairy Assistance
- Disasters and Emergency Assistance
- Price Support and Disaster Relief
- Explanation and Translation of Program Materials, Requirements and Signup Procedures
- Explanation of Agricultural Policies and Farm Bill
- Reduced Interest Rate Loans
- Farm Management and Financial Planning

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The FSA's Outreach Office helps FSA serve all American farmers and ranchers, specifically those who have not participated in, or have not received benefits from USDA or FSA programs. The FSA Outreach staff coordinates outreach efforts and initiatives through partnerships with diverse community-based organizations, farm groups, land grant universities, and local, state, tribal and federal governments to ensure the Agency reaches socially disadvantaged, limited resource farmers and members of racial and ethnic minority groups.

A VITAL ROLE IN FARM EXPORTS

The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) works to improve foreign market access for U.S. products, build new markets, improve the competitive position of U.S. agriculture in the global marketplace, and provide food aid and technical assistance to foreign countries.



FAS MAJOR SERVICES

- ⇒ Market intelligence, access, and development
- ⇒ Trade policy formulation and monitoring
- ⇒ Food Aid
- ⇒ Linkages to global resources and international organizations

HANDY FAS LINKS

- ⇒ Programs and Opportunities
<http://www.fas.usda.gov/programs.asp>
- ⇒ Commodities and Products
<http://www.fas.usda.gov/commodities.asp>
- ⇒ U.S. Exporter Assistance
http://www.fas.usda.gov/agx/exporter_assistance.asp
- ⇒ Market and Trade Data
<http://www.fas.usda.gov/markettradedata.asp>

U.S. Department of Agriculture

FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE



Programs

- Food Stamp Program
- National School Lunch Program
- School Breakfast Program
- Summer Food Service Program
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants & Children (WIC)
- Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
- Special Milk Program
- Child and Adult Care Food Program
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
- WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
- Nutrition Assistance Block Grants
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program
- Disaster Assistance



The **USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)** administers the nutrition assistance programs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The mission of FNS is to increase food security and reduce hunger in partnership with cooperating organizations by providing children and low-income people with access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education in a manner that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence.

USDA's 15 nutrition assistance programs are the first line of our Nations' defense against hunger. These nutrition assistance programs reach 1 in 5 Americans over the course of a year.

FNS has elevated nutrition and nutrition education to a top priority in all its programs. In addition to providing access to nutritious food, FNS also works to empower program participants with knowledge of the links between diet and health.

The Agency was established Aug. 8, 1969, but many of the food programs originated long before FNS existed as a separate agency within USDA.

FNS ensures that all eligible people know about nutrition assistance programs and participate in national and regional events that target underserved (elderly and working poor) and disadvantaged groups (Hispanics, African Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans-Alaskan Natives).

For additional information

For additional information on the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, visit www.fns.usda.gov.



**Food Safety and
Inspection Service**

FSIS



The Food Safety and Inspection Service

Our Mission:

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is the public health agency in the U.S. Department of Agriculture responsible for ensuring that the nation's commercial supply of meat, poultry, and egg products is safe, wholesome, and correctly labeled and packaged.

www.fsis.usda.gov



U.S. Forest Service

*"Caring for the Land
and Serving People"*

The Forest Service manages public lands in national forests and grasslands. The Forest Service is also the largest forestry research organization in the world, and provides technical and financial assistance to State and private forestry agencies. **Gifford Pinchot**, the first Chief of the Forest Service, summed up the mission of the Forest Service-- "to provide the greatest amount of good for the greatest amount of people in the long run."



Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) Department of Agriculture (USDA)

The Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) facilitates the marketing of livestock, poultry, meat, cereals, oilseeds, and related agricultural products, and promotes fair and competitive trading practices for the overall benefit of consumers and American agriculture. GIPSA's Federal Grain Inspection Service provides the market with terms and methods for quality assessments; maintains the integrity of the marketing system by enforcing the provisions of the U.S. Grain Standards Act, and provides for a third-party national inspection system comprised of Federal, State, and private providers. The Agency's Packers and Stockyards Program (P&SP) is a regulatory program that ensures open and competitive markets for livestock, meat, and poultry by providing payment protection, and guarding against deceptive trade practices and anti-competitive activity. As an impartial, third-party entity, GIPSA helps ensure a fair and competitive marketing system for all involved in the merchandising of grain and related products, livestock, meat, and poultry.

GIPSA's Values

GIPSA values integrity and professionalism; innovation among individuals and teams; diversity in the workforce; employees and customers; and fiscal responsibility in carrying out its mission.

GIPSA Accessibility

GIPSA maintains a toll-free hotline (1-800-998-3447) to allow any person to report to GIPSA violations or suspected violations and abuses in the grain, livestock, meat, and poultry industries. GIPSA's hotline is available to all, including small and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, 24-hours a day, 7-days a week, 365-days a year. Callers may remain anonymous if they wish.

GIPSA continuously strives to reach out to all members of the grain and livestock sectors of American agriculture, and especially to producers of all sizes, with an emphasis on small- and medium-sized farmers and ranchers, by hosting town hall meetings and forums, and by participating in industry-sponsored conferences and events. These activities allow GIPSA personnel to communicate with and seek input from all facets of the marketplace, and to learn more about the challenges facing today's grain, livestock, and poultry producers.

How To Contact Us

GIPSA Administrator
Stop 3601, Room 2055-South Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-3601
Tel: (202) 720-0219
Fax: (202) 205-9237

www.gipsa.usda.gov



USDA'S NATIONAL APPEALS DIVISION: "FACE TO FACE FAIRNESS"



U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Appeals Division (NAD) has announced "Face to Face Fairness," a nationwide effort to educate farmers and other USDA program participants about the availability of the NAD appeal process. If you've been turned down for a farm loan, had your rural housing mortgage accelerated, or been denied USDA program payments, assistance, or a grant, you may appeal to the National Appeals Division.

The National Appeals Division is an independent office that reports directly

to the Secretary of Agriculture. Any person who receives an adverse program decision from USDA's Farm Service Agency, Risk Management Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the three USDA Rural Development agencies may file an appeal with NAD.

Filing an appeal gives you a chance to explain why you do not agree with what the agency decided. You'll be able to present your side of the story and any evidence you have to show the agency was in error. You may choose a face-to-face hearing in your state, a telephone hearing, or a review of the documents by a NAD Hearing Officer.

NAD employs a two-stage appeal process. A participant has a right to a hearing in his state of residence before a NAD Hearing Officer. Thereafter, either the appellant or the agency may ask the NAD Director to reverse the Hearing Officer's determination. Last year, more than 3,000 cases were filed with NAD. Of those, 30 percent resulted in a favorable outcome to the appellant.

More information about the NAD appeal process is available on its web site located at <http://www.nad.usda.gov>. All NAD determinations are published there, after NAD deletes location and personal identifying information to protect the privacy of appellants. Any visitor to the NAD web site can conduct a full text search of these determinations.

Questions can be e-mailed to NADinfo@usda.gov, or you may call NAD's toll-free number: 1-877-4USDA NAD.



United States Department of Agriculture
Risk Management Agency

June 2007

2008 CROP INSURANCE FACT SHEET

RMA Outreach Programs

“Working Together to Preserve Family Farmers”

Risk Management Agency (RMA)

Manages USDA’s crop insurance policies, underwriting terms and **Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC)** provides subsidization and reinsurance. RMA also coordinates a risk management outreach and education program to assist producers and agribusinesses in understanding and managing increased risks associated with production, marketing, financial, legal and human resources. RMA is committed to ensuring **ALL** farmers and ranchers, including women, minorities and other **traditionally under-served groups*** can equally access and participate in **ALL** RMA programs and activities.

***Traditionally under-served farmers and ranchers include:** •Women •African-Americans •Asians & Pacific Islanders •American Indians & Alaskan Natives •Hispanics.

Through **Outreach** to women, minorities, and other traditionally under-served groups, RMA works to provide equal access and participation.

RMA Outreach Goals Include:

- Ensuring that every farmer and rancher has equal access to all risk management tools and programs, and all customers and potential customers are treated with dignity and respect;
- Better serving the traditionally under-served through partnerships and collaborations with the public and private sector, the land grant system, and community based organizations;
- Establishing dialog and partnerships to collectively work toward improving risk management strategies by providing the opportunity to review RMA programs and ensure they meet the needs of American Agriculture;

- Increasing awareness and effective use of risk management tools;
- Providing risk management education to help farmers and ranchers better manage their risks;
- Enhancing and strengthening the safety net for the traditionally under-served;
- Providing informational materials and developing messages in formats geared to under-served customers;
- Providing financial assistance to limited resource farmers and ranchers; and
- Improving customer service through cultural awareness and civil rights/outreach training.

Outreach Partnership Programs

Community Outreach and Assistance Partnerships:

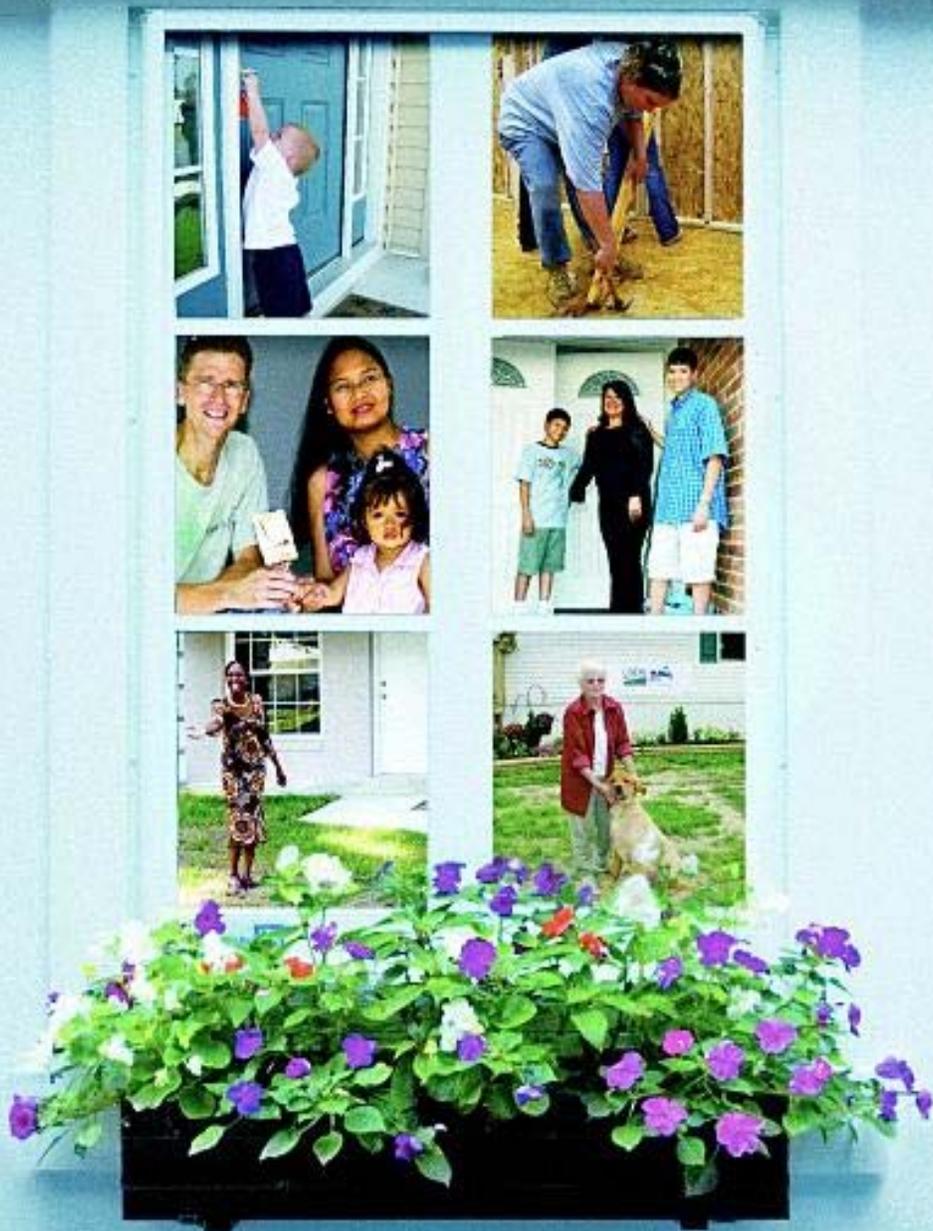
Ensuring **ALL** farmers and ranchers, including women, limited resource, socially disadvantaged, and other traditionally underserved producers of priority or underserved commodities and/or specialty crops are provided information and training necessary to use financial management, crop insurance, and marketing contracts.

Additional Information

Further RMA program information is available on the RMA website: www.rma.usda.gov/ or from ten Regional Offices across the U.S. or David Wiggins, National Program Outreach Specialist, USDA/RMA Stop 0801 1400 Independence Ave., SW Washington, DC 20250 or (202) 690-2686.

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This fact sheet gives only a general overview of the crop insurance program and is not a complete policy. For further information and an evaluation of your risk management needs, contact a crop insurance agent.



Own Your Future



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Committed to the future of rural communities.



USDA OFFICE OF SMALL FARMS COORDINATION

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) Office of Small Farms Coordination (OSFC) facilitates the coordination of USDA's activities related to small farms, beginning farmers and ranchers and socially disadvantaged agricultural producers. This Office is located and supported by the Office of the Under Secretary for the Research, Education and Economics (REE) mission area.

Small Farms Coordination has four basic objectives, to:

- Integrate the concepts of small farms into USDA's policies and programs.
- Ensure USDA participation in interagency efforts are relevant to small farms and USDA is participating with other Federal and State agencies on small farms related issues.
- Ensure USDA and the Secretary is represented on key international and national small farms and sustainable development efforts.
- Foster and/or maintain open communication with organizations about small farms and develop collaborative partnerships to deliver USDA policy and programs to better serve constituents.

Small farms play an important role in the U.S. agricultural sector. The National Commission on Small Farms uses \$250,000 in gross sales as its cutoff between small and large farms. In 2004, small farms accounted for 92 percent of all farms and ranches, owned 71 percent of the total productive assets in agriculture, operated 60 percent of all land used in agricultural production, and accounted for 26 percent of all agricultural receipts from crops and livestock. Small farms took leadership in the development of organic production systems in the United States. In the late 1990s, the organic and natural foods market became the fastest growing sector of the U.S. food market.

Small farms @USDA
www.usda.gov/oce/smallfarm



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The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights gratefully acknowledges those representatives of Community-Based Organizations, USDA Agencies, and others who assisted with Partners IV. We are grateful for your support and participation.

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